

- I. **Call to Order:** The RDA Board meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 18, 2011, with Chairman Leigh Morris presiding.
- II. **Roll Call:** Present: Chairman Leigh Morris, Harley Snyder, Lou Martinez, Bill Joiner, Ed Glover, and Jeff Good. Six members were present constituting a quorum.
- III. **Public Comment:** *None*
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** E. Glover moved for approval of the consent agenda with a second by B. Joiner. All were in favor and the consent agenda was approved.

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| a. <u>Minutes of the Board Meeting of July 26, 2011:</u> | <b>Approved</b> |
| b. <u>Consultant Services Report:</u>                    | <b>Approved</b> |
| c. <u>Executive Director's Report:</u>                   | <b>Approved</b> |
| d. <u>Chairman's Report:</u>                             | <b>Approved</b> |
| e. <u>MBE/WBE Quarterly Report:</u>                      | <b>Approved</b> |

V. **Action on Recommendations from Working Groups:**

a. **Ratification:**

- i. **CN Grant Application:** B. Hanna stated that the CN Kirkyard will bring an estimated 251 jobs to the region over the next several years. The grant was generated at \$4.5 million initially, but had rolled back to \$4 million. This grant is for gap funding purposes.
- ii. **Modern Forge:** B. Hanna stated that Modern Forge, which manufactures machine parts, is requesting to receive \$2 million to relocate their facilities to Merrillville. CN and Modern Forge will ensure long-term full time employment opportunities. B. Hanna requested that the Board approve both grants totaling \$6 million.

J. Nowacki, resident of Gary, voiced his concern regarding the two companies. He stated that it is unfavorable for the RDA to spend millions of dollars in attracting these companies to the region.

Rev. Rivera addressed her concern about the RDA still not having a regional community benefits agreement in place. There is talk about jobs coming to the region but there is no system for those who come from the most disparaged communities, and whether or not they are benefiting from these opportunities. Her primary concern is that with all RDA funded projects, we give 30% of those work hours to the residents in the most distressed communities.

D. Babcock, director of NIPSCO, stated that these two projects are outstanding and very beneficial to the communities of northwest Indiana. NIPSCO has joined with the community and the state to propose a consent agreement package. D. Babcock strongly believes in these projects and applauds the RDA in their decision to do so.

C. Meyer's, Gary's director in the department of planning, wants it to be made aware that the expansion will help the restoration of Gary's tax base. The significance of these investments will provide well-paying jobs within the communities. C. Meyer's wants to reassure that proper and accurate information is portrayed to the Board and to the public.

E. Mosley stated that there is no plan of action taking place that says these jobs are going to specifically benefit those areas that are most in need. He also stressed the issue that there needs to be a framework in place that addresses how the dollars are being returned to the communities.

- iii. **Federal Funds, Local Match:** B. Hanna stated that federal funds are being leveraged with successful leadership support from Congressman Visclosky and the City of Gary. Trends are heading in the right direction and with each opportunity the leverage is at an 80/20 percent local match. S. Ziller is handling all financial responsibilities with leveraging and is seeing success.

J. Nowacki added that the RDA should start spending their money more prudently.

C. Meyers stated that the RDA is partnering with the EPA and they are allowing leverage on existing RDA dollars. This will allow four times the improvement at the lagoon and will allow for an additional dredge that will create more aquatic species. The money being leveraged will expand the scope that was originally funded by the RDA grant. In terms of jobs, the EPA is bringing in teams that promise to hire locally within the community.

B.Joiner moved for approval of the request with a second by L. Martinez. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- iv. **2010/2011 Budgets:** In regards to the budget, B. Hanna stated that drafts are currently being worked on. As it stands now the RDA is at 2.8%-2.9% administrative cost. The budget will be presented during the next meeting.

- v. **City of Portage Grant Application:** B. Hanna introduced Portage Mayor Olga Velasquez, who presented to the Board the grant application that was recently submitted to the RDA.

O. Velasquez stated to the members of the Board that the City of Portage great appreciation for the opportunity to request funding. O. Velasquez submitted to the Board a request in the amount of \$1.98 million, which will go towards the designing and engineering work for a trail that will run from County Line Road to the Ameriplerx business park. Portage wants to fill in the missing link in the Marquette Greenway system with a complex set of hiking and bike trails. It's about building a place where you can live, work, play, and stay, Velasquez stated. She also added that \$1.2 million from federal grants were awarded towards the trail along with another grant for \$700,000 that is currently pending for approval.

B.Joiner moved to accept the application for further review with a second by L. Martinez. All Were in favor and the motion was approved.

- vi. **NIRPC Grant Application:** B. Hanna stated that as this time the grant has been withdrawn for consideration.

B.Joiner moved for approval of request with a second by L. Martinez. All were in favor of the motion and the motion was approved.

**VI. Project Status Review:**

a. **Public Comment:** *None*

b. **Regional Bus Authority:**

i. **Public Comment:** *None*

ii. **Update:** T. Brown provided the following updates:

- A.) The services provided over the last 2 years have increased with an average of 61% in ridership.
- B.) Complimentary Trend has a 104% increase in ridership since the RBA has been involved. "If we provide the services, and if we provide the access that people want, ridership numbers will increase because the proof is in the numbers".
- C.) Due to local revenues being reduced the RBA will not be awarded/granted any funding towards the bus system. With funds not being available, the Brown route along with the Red/Green route has been eliminated.
- D.) CMAQ dollars were recently awarded and are currently being used to restore the commuter bus services. It is only a matter of when the RBA could restore the routes.
- E.) The RBA is currently working with the federal government and NIRPC to attempt for pre-expending dollar's before the grant is assigned, in order to help restore these services sooner.
- F.) Since the elimination of the routes exact numbers will be presented for the Board by the next scheduled meeting.

E. Glover asked T. Brown to provide the Board with an outline of the bus routes in map form.

L. Martinez added that the RBA is currently working with the RDA and others within the region to help resolve the underlying issues regarding the routes.

B.Hanna understands the critical comments being brought forward from those who depend on these services the most. The issues are a crucial part of the infrastructure of northwest Indiana. When the RDA was first created by the legislature in 2005, the mission stated that the RDA was to be a catalyst to improve the economy and the quality of life by protecting collective assets such as the GYY and the Shoreline. The primary role with the RBA was to provide funding for capital purchases as a platform to move into the next phase. This platform has been established and therefore the RDA will discontinue funding operations at the end of 2011.

B.Joiner moved for affirmation of position statement with a second by H. Snyder. All were in favor of the motion and the motion was approved.

c. **Shoreline Redevelopment**

i. **Public Comment:** *None*

ii. **Update:** B. Joiner provided the following updates:

- A.) Hammond Lakes Area, all 2010 and 2011 projects adhere to timeline and budget. The City of Hammond and the Hammond Port Authority have completed and opened the Water Gardens Family Aquatic Play Center, a \$2.6 million splash pad, bath house, park, and parking improvements at 121<sup>st</sup> and Calumet Avenue. The George Lake Trail Pedestrian Bridge Project is about 65% completed and the project is anticipated to be completed in the spring of 2012. \$31,480,000 was committed with \$18,297,200 expended and a remaining balance of \$13,182,800.
- B.) Whiting Lake Front, the overall components of each project are on time and within budget. \$22,008,225 was committed with \$3,438,332 expended and a balance of \$18,569,893 remains.
- C.) Gary East Marquette Park, on October 6, 2011 the EPA Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response announced that the RDA-funded City of Gary Marquette Park

Lakefront East Project will receive \$1.0 million for dredging of the Marquette Park Lagoons. All projects are on time and are within budget. \$28,190,000 was committed with \$5,381,901 expended and a balance of \$23,808,099 remains.

- D.) East Chicago Shoreline Gateway/Water Filtration Plant, the new \$12,000,000 North Town Senior Citizen Building is now under construction in the 2300 block of Broadway as of 10/3/11, with a completion date of October 2012. The development is a 56 unit Tax credit housing project, which also includes NSP funds and private financing. Most of the land on which the new development as well as the new office building is located on land that was assembled using the RDA grant to the city. New single family housing off of Broadway Avenue is planned as the next phase of the North Harbor development. Construction could begin as early as November. The new water filtration plant remains under construction and on schedule for a spring 2012 completion date. Operational and startup tests are underway, and the new water plant is expected to come on line sometime end of October, and current water plant will start shutdown procedures and decommissioning. The City expects to continue demolition work starting in the fall with remediation/removal of hazardous materials at the existing plant and then complete demolition in winter/spring of 2012. \$5,880,000 was committed to the overall projects with \$ 1,708,604 expended and a remaining balance of \$4,171,396.
- E.) Town of Porter: Gateway to the Dunes, the Town of Porter continue to work diligently on all projects. The overall component of each project adheres to timeline and is within budget. \$5,731,500 was committed with \$1,402,534 expended and an overall balance of \$4,328,966 remains.
- F.) Valparaiso Partnership, RDA is awaiting results of Round 2 funding from the Forest Service grant program which is currently funding the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES). The RDA's request for funding is in the amount of \$225,000. The RDA partners are not asking for a cash match this time but have applied for a grant admin fee of 5% payable to the RDA. \$20,000 was committed to the project with a leverage of \$354,878.

J. Nowacki stressed that no results are being made.

Rev. Streatameyer expressed his appreciation for all RDA projects that are currently underway. He appreciates the leadership being brought to the communities and is eager to see plans made to include the residents that reside within those communities in terms of employment. With that said, Streatameyer supports the community benefits agreement.

E. Mosley stated that there are no jobs being afforded to those citizens residing in East Chicago. An agreement needs to be in place to provide those who live within the community jobs.

R. Leonard voiced his frustration with the amount of money being spent in areas such as the Marquette Park. The Board should focus more on the needs of the citizens.

Rev. commended T. Brown for his efforts in bringing the citizens within the communities together but there still needs to be a benefits agreement in place. Money that is taken from within the communities should be beneficial and brought back into the communities.

**d. Expansion of the Gary Chicago Airport:**

**i. Public Comment:** *None*

**ii. Update:** L. Morris acknowledged the well-developed partnership between the RDA and the Gary Airport. The partnership is being pursued vigorously and has implemented a

comprehensive business plan that proves to be a clear example of how we can work together collaboratively to make major things happen in the region. L. Morris turned it over to Steve Landry, Deputy Director, of the Gary Airport.

S. Landry provided the Board with the following updates:

- A.) Runway expansion is on schedule for a 2013 completion, mandated by the FAA.
- B.) The partnership between the GYY and the RDA is an essential part of getting things done and the support is highly appreciated.
- C.) RDA funded projects that are in progress including putting an overpass over Airport Road that will take cars and trucks over the rerouted tracks. This project is currently being delayed due to a property issue agreement.
- D.) The GYY is waiting for an agreement with the railroad CSX Corp. that will allow it to construct a haul road. The agreement gives the authority right of entry to bring heavy equipment within 50 feet of CSX tracks so new bridges can be built to carry Canadian National Railway Co. tracks over Norfolk Southern Corp. tracks north of the Airport.

J. Nowacki argued that the RDA should not waste their money or time on the Gary Airport.

L. Morris suggested that J. Nowacki review the comprehensive business plan between the RDA and GYY which explains the specific recommendations.

B.Hanna adds to the discussion that there is an MOU and within that document is a very complicated construction process including the three railroads. The RDA and the GYY have achieved a great level of success with the expansion project. The RDA has been involved in the process and is committed to get things done.

Rev. Rivera stressed that the federation is still continuing to push for a regional benefits agreement because of the jobs that will be available at the Airport.

**e. Extension of South Shore Commuter Service:**

- i. **Public Comment:** In regards to the closing of the Miller/Downtown bus stops in Gary, J. Nowacki stated that the RDA should take a position and fund the necessary needs of the citizens.
- ii. **Update:** H. Snyder stated that the Working Groups are continuing to meet with NICTD to discuss their business plans for the extension of services. A meeting is scheduled for early November. In regards to Mr. Nowacki's comment H. Snyder stated that NICTD's primary funding source comes from the State of Indiana and that any comments regarding the closing of the bus stops should be between him and NICTD. Accusations will not be tolerated.

**f. RDA Administrative:**

- i. **Public Comment:** *None*

- ii. **Update:** B.Hanna stated that although the RDA staff is small there is a need for a more significant increase in 2012. There are currently two full-time employees and one part-time. The role of the RDA is to invest in public resources that will build the economy of northwest Indiana and to provide a long-term return on investments. The RDA maintains several consultant teams on contract which include Policy Analytics and B&D Consulting, each of which bring a broad array of expertise to accomplish the role of the RDA and to provide more opportunities for investments. Currently, the RDA is improving its communication with the public by engaging in social networking including Facebook and through the RDA website. The main objective is to provide as much information as we can to the public and improve our communication.

**VII. Unfinished Business:**

**Public Comment:** *None*

- i. **Employment Data Pilot:** B.Hanna stated that the RDA is working with Sharon McGuire of ODS to make sure that local employment is being provided. Our intent is to make sure that the impact of all RDA funded projects is benefiting those within the communities of northwest Indiana.

S. McGuire presented a brief summary of distributed handout. The handout includes the county the individuals reside in, contract amount, total number of employees working on the project, wages paid and the trade types they are employed in. She stressed that the grantees have been working hard to provide the data.

L. Morris asked Sharon to summarize in more detail the key points in the data she provided.

S. McGuire explained that in the totals line, located on the bottom part of the sheet, shows that for those seven grantees we had 48 subcontractors that were being used in those various projects. Out of the 48 subcontractors, 36 fall into the Buy Indiana Policy. Sharon also added that this is only 2-3 months of collected data and in the future more numbers will be provided.

B.Hanna encouraged the grantees to continue to work hard to drive those numbers up. Having a starting point is important and this goes to show that a lot of effort is being made.

J. Good believed that it is important to understand that although this is an excellent report it is not the know-all end-all because the grantees are still going to be coming up with the Gary Airport work. A lot of money is being spent by the railroads and that work is not open for bid. This is something that the Board has no input on because a large part of the Airport project has to do with the railroad relocation.

B.Hanna stated that with the assistance of L. Martinez the two of them are currently working on a way to promote employment on projects. They have both met with pre-apprentice programs to find ways to facilitate individuals into the program and to prepare them to be full-time apprentice.

Rev. Rivera stated that the Federation has already entered into a partnership with workforce development and they have realized that the communities they are targeting are not job ready.

J. Nowacki believed that the communities are in fact job ready and that nothing is being done to provide the communities with those jobs.

L. Morris kindly asked that Mr. Nowacki stop making accusations. The Board will answer appropriate comments, but accusations will not be tolerated.

H. Snyder believed that the meeting had gone from being a productive session to an incarceration of people who are trying to do a good job, whether it be members representing the Airport, people from the bus system, or in fact members of the Board. He felt insulted, therefore, asked that the Chairman close the meeting.

H. Snyder motioned to adjourn the meeting. With a lack of a second the motion failed.

**VIII. New Business:**

*a. Public Comment: None*

*b. Other: None*

**IX. 2011/2012 Future Meeting Planning:** The quarterly Board structure and the monthly Working Groups are reflected in the planning calendar.

*a. Public Comment: None*

*b. Working Group and Board Meeting, November 15, 2011 TBA*

*c. Working Group Meeting, December 20, 2011 TBA*

**General Public Comment:** E. Glover would like to thank the Federation for making the move to take the next step. The Federation is working hard to prepare those individuals to become part of these projects and applauds all of their hard work with going forward and making a change to improve northwest Indiana

**X. Adjournment:** Without further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Jakubin